

Creating a Classroom Where Readers Flourish: How to Make a Reader's Notebook**How to Make a Reader's Notebook**

The reader's notebook serves a place for readers to keep records of their reading and learning throughout the year.

Materials

one seventy-sheet single subject spiral notebook

one set of reader's notebook handouts

glue or glue stick

scissors

Post-It notes or adhesive binder tabs

fine-tip Sharpie

pencil

Step One

Number every page of the notebook both front and back, starting with the first page. Use a pencil, so you can erase those numbering errors!

Step Two

Trim the handouts so that each page will fit onto a spiral page.

Step Three

Glue pages in the following order and locations (assume that skipped page numbers are left blank for extra space or student work):

Page One—Genre Requirements Tally Chart: Readers use this sheet to tally books completed for each genre requirement. I sign off on each genre as the student completes it after verifying the tallies during reader's notebook conferences.

Pages Three, Four, and Five—Reading List: Readers use these sheets to record books they have read. I ask students to list the title and author on the day they start reading it, and fill in the rest of the information when the book is complete. This way, I can see which books students are currently reading or make note of books that students abandon. If students abandon a book, the title and author remain in the list, but they mark an A in the "Date Completed" column.

Pages Seven and Eight—Books to Read List: Readers use these sheets to record books they would like to read in the future. On Fridays, when we conduct book commercials, every member of the class opens their notebooks to this page

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(including me!) and lists any books from the commercials that sound interesting. We add more books to the list whenever we discover them.

Page Eleven—Status of the Class Chart: Readers record their daily progress with their independent book. I use this as a management piece the first few weeks of the year and then stop using it. Students record information about the book that they are currently reading onto the chart each day at the beginning of the class, and I take “roll” by asking students to read their status. This helps my developing and dormant readers get into the groove. I abandon the chart after everyone gets going because it becomes a time drain over the long haul. It is a nice tool for letting children share their books and reinforce the need for daily reading, but after a few weeks, students don’t benefit from the public status check.

****Page Fifteen—Possible Topics for Response Entries chart:** Readers use this chart to record the response topics I teach during minilessons. In the past, I gave students a list of possible response topics, but they did not use them! Now, I teach and we practice various response topics in this section of the notebook and students use the list as a table of contents for response examples. After we have practiced and discussed ten responses or so, the students and I use this section for our response letters. In my own notebook, I use this section to record notes for conferences, writing each child’s name on the top of one page.

****Page Sixty-Seven—Reading Mini-Lessons chart:** Readers use this chart to record the reading mini-lessons I teach (literary elements, comprehension strategies, and so on). Students record notes, examples, and practice in this section and use the chart as a table of contents. I record notes about my lessons in this section of my notebook.

****I am not a big fan of making copies of a blank page with a header—it wastes my copy allotment! Students could write the heading at the top of these pages and use the lines on the spiral page. I have noticed that some students respond better to the formality of a chart page, though. You decide...**

Step Four

Add tabs or Post-It labels to the following pages (use the Sharpie so the labels don’t fade):

Page Three—Reading List

Page Fifteen—Response Entries

Page Sixty-Seven—Mini-Lessons

Page One Hundred and Fifteen—Response Projects: Readers use this section to record notes and research for book reviews, book trailer scripts and other response projects.

Step Five

Write your first and last name, and the title, “Reader’s Notebook” on the outside cover of the spiral.